REPORT OF THE SECOND CONFERENCE OF RURAL RECREATION ORGANIZERS

OF THE

MADRAS PRESIDENCY

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

Rural recreation was introduced by Government as a provincial scheme with effect from 1st June 1942 as the result of the experience gained by successful rural recreation programmes in the Prohibition district from 1937 onwards. At the first Conference of Rural Recreation Organizers held at the Y.M.C.A. College, Saidapet, in November 1943, rural recreation programme were discussed at length and an attempt was made to co-ordinate the work of the Rural Recreation Organizers.

The rapid changes in the country created the need for further and fuller discussion on the programme and problems of the scheme. When this was reported, Government readily sanctioned the convening of a Second Conference in their G.O. Rout. No. 732, Development, dated 1st October 1946, and authorized the Chief Inspector of Physical Education, Madras, to organize and conduct it.

The Conference, inaugurated by the Hon'ble Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami Raja, Minister for Agriculture, Government of Madras, was held at the Y.M.C.A. College, Saidapet, from the 28th to the 30th October 1946 and was attended by Rural Recreation Organizers from eighteen districts as given below :—

(1) Sri K. S. Madhavan, Tinnevelly.
(2) Sri P. Krishnamurthy, Bellary.
(3) Sri V. Ramakrishnayya, Kistna.
(4) Sri R. V. Narasimham, Cuddapah.
(5) Mr. C. R. Joseph, Malabar.
(6) Sri Ch. Tiruvenkatachari, East Godavari.
(7) Sri N. Showri Reddy, Anantapur.
(8) Mr. N. D. Samuel, Tanjore.
(9) Mr. M. S. Swamidoss, The Nilgiris.
(10) Mr. T. J. Mathews, South Kanara.
(11) Sri Venkiah, West Godavari.
(12) Mr. K. Benjamin, Kurnool.
(13) Sri P. Muthu Thevar, Madura.
(14) Sri P. R. Nainar, Chingleput.
(15) Sri K. M. Pachayappan, Coimbatore.
(16) Mr. T. L. Samuel, Nellore.
(17) Mr. Victor Chelliah, Salem.
(18) Janab Meer Ali Raza, North Arcot.

Sri K. Nagarathnam Iyer, Special Development Officer, Salem, was present all the days and took an active part in the proceedings.

R. M. Sundaram, Esq., I.C.S., Additional Secretary, Development Department, Government of Madras, both in his welcome address and at the closing session of the Conference demonstrated his abiding interest in rural recreation. As a matter of fact, the Conference would not have been such a great success but for his keen enthusiasm and strong support.

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE.

Monday, 28th October 1946—

4-30 P.M. First session—Opening of the Conference by the Hon'ble Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami Raja, Minister for Agriculture, Government of Madras.

Tuesday, 29th October 1946—

10 A.M. .. Second session—Selected papers on "Progress of the Rural Recreation Scheme" and discussion. (Chairman—Dr. G. F. Andrews.)

2 P.M. .. Third session—Discussion on "Aspects of Rural Recreation work that should find a place in the Rural Recreation Scheme." (Chairman—Dr. G. F. Andrews.)

Wednesday, 30th October 1946—

10 A.M. .. Fourth session—Discussion on "The Problems of the Rural Recreation Scheme." (Chairman—Dr. G. F. Andrews.)

2 P.M. .. Fifth session—Resolutions. (Chairman—Dr. G. F. Andrews.)

4 P.M. .. Closing session—Presentation of Summary of the Proceedings of the Conference and Validictory Address. (Chairman—R. M. Sundaram, Esq., I.C.S.)

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THE OPENING SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE.

The opening session of the Conference was held in the spacious hall of the Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education, Saidapet, at 4-30 p.m. After prayer by the College students, Sri R. M. Sundaram delivered the welcome address. He referred to the rural welfare schemes of the Madras Government and said that when such schemes were introduced in Salem after the introduction of Prohibition, they were found to be a success. He spoke in appreciative terms of the Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education, whose staff and alumni played a leading part in the successful development of rural recreation programmes in the Prohibition districts and made it possible for Government to accept it as a province-wide scheme. He laid stress on the fact that the Rural Recreation Organizers are pioneers of a nation-building activity and that they should carry on the work in a missionary spirit and with enthusiasm and energy.

Dr. G. F. Andrews, Chief Inspector of Physical Education, then placed his " Review of the Rural Recreation work in the Presidency " before the Conference. He said—

" Rural recreation work had its beginning in this province in a small way in Salem district, when Prohibition was first introduced. At the request of Government, the late Mr. H. C. Buck, who was then the Adviser to Government on Physical Education, deputed Mr. P. M. Joseph, B.SC., B.P.E., M.Ed., then his assistant at the Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education, Saidapet, to organize rural games and recreational physical activities in the villages to enable the village-folk to use the ' enforced ' leisure which was suddenly thrust on them as the result of the introduction of the Prohibition Act in the district. With the co-operation of a couple of assistants, and with the active support of the Revenue officials and Prohibition officers, Mr. Joseph succeeded in demonstrating the effectiveness of selected programme of rural games and recreational physical activities under intelligent, enthusiastic, imaginative and wise leadership. The success of this experiment in Salem district emboldened Government to extend it to the other three prohibition districts of North Arcot, Chittoor and Cuddapah, and to employ Rural Recreation Organizers in these districts under Special Development Officers.

" It was not until 1942, however, that the Rural Recreation Scheme became province-wide. Due to a large extent to the untiring efforts of the late Mr. Buck, Government in their G.O. Ms. No. 729, Development, dated 1st April 1942, accepted the scheme as a provincial scheme, and proceeded to appoint Rural Recreation Organizers in every district, placing them in the non-Prohibition districts under the control of the Collectors. Graduates with the diploma in physical education were made eligible for

appointment as Rural Recreation Organizers on a scale of pay of Rs. 75—5/2—100, while undergraduates with the Government certificate in Physical Education could be appointed as Assistant Rural Recreation Organizers on Rs. 45—5/2—70, with a fixed travelling allowance of Rs. 20 and Rs. 15, respectively. At the time of convening this Conference, Rural Recreation Organizers were in service in all but Guntur, Ramnad and Vizagapatam districts. Since then, due to the more immediate needs of the recently re-introduced Prohibition Act, these are now, I understand, all concentrated in the eight prohibition districts thus supplying nearly a third of the personnel required for these districts.

"What is the nature of rural recreation work that has been carried over by these Rural Recreation Organizers all these years? An attempt was made to formulate certain policies and programme of work with practical details in the first conference of Rural Recreation Organizers held here at this College in November 1943 under the presidency of Mr. N. K. Mia, who was then Adviser to Government on Physical Education. But, by and large, the Rural Recreation Organizers were left to their own initiative and resource. Their reports give an insight into their work. Here are a few extracts :—

'In selected villages in every taluk and sub-taluk rural sports were held and prizes distributed. Emphasis is being placed on such competition like ploughing, transplanting paddy shoots, spinning, weaving, pounding and winnowing relay (paddy) for woman, etc. Local arts like villadippu, pavaikoothu or marionettes, silambam, Madura veshadaris, mimicries are being encouraged as far as possible by cash endowments. Kathakalakshepams and bhajanas have been programmed with success.' (Tinnevelly report.)

'The main work entrusted to the staff is the organization of rural games—both equipment and non-equipment. . . . We were organizing reading circles, cub masters schools, etc. . . . During the year 1945–46 the turnaments were conducted successfully. During the tours we meet the villagers and conduct rural games. At the end of the games, we speak to them about the rural subjects, physical education, the function of talimkhanas, the value of co-operation and co-operative system, agriculture, adult education, cottage industries, etc.' (Cuddapah report.)

'In another district refresher classes were conducted by the Rural Recreation Organizer. Besides Indian and non-equipment games, the course covered subjects like "physical training, Bee-keeping, agriculture, co-operation, maternity and child welfare, contagious diseases, village sanitation, First aid, See multiplication scheme, Grow More Food, wheat and its preparation, etc.' " Mostly teachers attended these refresher classes. In this district the Rural Recreation Organizer also organized Dramatic Associations. (Nilgiris report.)

The following is thought provoking :—

'A hundred centres were formed in our district and are running. The tourneys have been recognized as an annual feature and I hope they will be conducted regularly on a grand scale.'

'During the sporting season, enthusiasm and active co-operation will be evinced to convert them to a grand success.

'Sound as the recreation scheme is, I cannot assure of any remarkable changes in the working of clubs out of season unless the following is done, namely, (*a*) illiteracy is combated, (*b*) proper leadership is encouraged, (*c*) incentives are created, (*d*) financial support is extended, (*e*) proper control and supervision is exercised, (*f*) co-operation of other departments is unequivocally enlisted and (*g*) economic depression is balanced.' (Kurnool report.)

"Grama sanghams have been organized in many a district and are said to be functioning, especially at times of tournaments which appear to be a common feature, and which are made possible by the Government grants to districts for this purpose, augmented by the discretionary grants from Collectors, donations from panchayat and local boards, and subscriptions by the generous public. Folk dances are said to be included in the programmes here and there. The development of rural playgrounds in villages through reservation of poramboke lands or the use of private lands with permission, and utilization of funds earmarked for this purpose by Collectors out of their discretionary grants or collected through subscriptions and donations from the public has been a valuable outcome of the scheme.

"The programme of work of the Rural Recreation Organizers has been, as stated before, largely left to their initiative and resources, but approved and directed by their respective officers. In some districts, emphasis has been placed on concentrated work in a few selected centres, in some on intensive work, firka by firka or taluk by taluk, while in others the Rural Recreation Organizers have toured their districts extensively, flying from village to village.

"While it must be conceded that, by and large, some good has come out of the scheme, yet it must be confessed that the spasmodic and sporadic efforts have been very much un-co-ordinated and un-regulated much being left to the initiative of the Rural Recreation Organizers, or to the special interest taken by the district officers. The lack of direction, support and encouragement from a central authority has deprived many a Rural Recreation Organizer of his initiative, and the absence of regulated supervision has left him a free lance. The problems of the scheme have been too many for the Rural Recreation Organizers to tackle, poorly paid as they are with scarcely any status. The difficulties of life and travel of 'war duration,' followed by an accelerated dose of them after the 'cessation of war' have left them with little energy to keep up the fight, and the Rural Recreation Scheme was fairly on its way to the rocks, when the Act of Government in reviving prohibition has given it a new fillip. And now under the energizing guidance of Mr. A. F. W. Dixon, the Prohibition Commissioner, who knows all about of the scheme being connected with it from the beginning and with the strong support of the Development Department of Government, headed by the Hon. the Minister in charge, who is happily with us to-day, one

may well hope for a brighter and more prospective future for the scheme and to all these Rural Recreation Organizers who have toiled hitherto through thick and thin.

"I may be permitted at this juncture, Sir, to place before you a few suggestions which have been on my mind ever since I have had anything to do with the organization of this Conference. These are the results of my recent contact with the villagers in their villages as Security Supervision of the National War Front, and as District Organizer of the Publicity Department, and of my experiences over a number of years as one in charge of programmes of health, physical education and recreation in the educational institutions in the province. My travels abroad in the United States of America, and my studies on 'Recreation' in which I specialized at the Springfield College, United States of America, and later embolden me.

"In the first place, there is need for a clear out conception of 'Recreation.' 'Recreation' has two cannotations depending on how it is written and pronounced. If as one word—Recreation—it means joy, entertainment, amusement, pastime, play and so on. If as two—'Re-creation'—the meaning is entirely different indicative of a new birth, a new creation. The goal of Rural Recreation is of re-habilitating the poor villager,—drunkard or otherwise,—into a new life, of making a new man of him, of making him respect himself through recreational materials and methods. Unfortunately, due to forces beyond the control of the Rural Recreation Organizers the goal has remained at a distance as a vision, recreation has receded to the background and recreation mainly through rural games and occasionally through the folk songs and dances has become the be-all and end-all of the recreation scheme. A thorough re-orientation in outlook is needed. It is not the game of chedugudu or kho-kho, the tug of war, or the tournament or the sports that is fundamental to rural recreation. No doubt these should have a place in the programme. But something more vital is need. The story, the song, the dance, the drama with topics and themes taken from the Epics, the Puranas and Ithihasas—these should be the live features of the scheme gripping the villagers in their appeal to their love of the rhythmical and traditional and engrossing because of their innate nearness to the realities of life. Through these the villager should find his soul become convinced and convicted of the sordiness of his life and be re-created for his own sake and for that of his family and community.

"Secondly, the Rural Recreation Organizers in charge of this vitalizing programme should themselves be free from want—that freedom which is one of the four Roosevelt promised the world. Enthusiasm and love of work could not be expected from hungry souls and this is exactly the position of the Rural Recreation Organizers. They are hungry and they have hungry mouths to feed at home. They tour the villages where food is scarce, and amenities of life rare, nay practically non-existent. Tired and hungry, anxious about their family and children, ill-cared for and unattended to in the villages, zealous for their work but dejected because of the lack of response, these Rural Recreation Organizers

make some attempt to justify their existence. Sheer personality and love of work has sustained them hitherto and they have somehow survived. Their plight must be remedied. They should themselves be energetic, vigorous and enthusiastic if their work is to be vitalizing. Better pay and prospects and extended facilities for work will give them a new lease of life for sustained efforts.

"Thirdly the facilities for the work should be improved. Till recently, the Publicity Department (former National War Front) used propaganda vans fully equipped for village work. These vans are still available. There should be one such van for each taluk. Visual instruction and musical broadcast are easily possible and through the public address system installed in these vans, thousands can be reached over the microphone. Such a van under the control of an officer not less in rank than a Deputy Tahsildar with the necessary number of assistants can be of the greatest use. (In passing, I may suggest that all personnel of the Rural Recreation Scheme should have the designations of the officers of the Revenue Department, namely, Deputy Collectors, Tahsildars, Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors. They may be put in charge of special work such as prohibition, recreation, propaganda, music and drama, etc. The reason for this suggestion is that these designations are well known in the villages and command respect and response. A band of such workers with a van will find that they can do a tremendous lot of work. Their travelling will be easy, they can cover a number of villages in a day, advertisement will be no problem, and the chances of an intensive programme will be increased a hundredfold, if not a thousandfold. Financially, enough grants should be made for the necessary recreational material, for the development of recreational centres, for subsidising Grama Sanghams, Dramatic Associations, etc. An attractive club house with a neatly laid park and enclosed ground for games and other recreational activities and with facilities for the development of leisure time productive arts and crafts (cottage industries) should be provided in every village to serve as the community centre for all re-creational activities in the village.

"It may not be out of place to add that all the personnel of the rural recreation scheme should have a sufficiently high educational background with a village or rural bias. None should be below the S.S.L.C. standard. Other things being equal, it is undoubted that one who has completed the high school stage has advantages over his compatriot of lessor education. It may be that in the desire to put the scheme into effect straightaway the less qualified may be taken on with the hope that they may be all right with experience and additional training. But entertainment of such persons will be an injustice to all the Rural Recreation Organizers now in service who have pioneered all these years through thick and thin. It will also mean a watering down of the high ideals and standards of the scheme, and at the beginning stage lowered standards may spell disaster. I would urge with all the experiences gained over years that every attempt should be made to recruit persons of a high educational standard, undoubted leadership, vision and enthusiasm for this great work of rural

recreation. Such personnel can with better success secure and maintain the interest and co-operation of the local village leaders, and establish Grama Sanghams which may be expected to continue to exist and thrive even after occasional visits of the officers of the Rural Recreation Scheme.

"It is also high time that the rural recreation work is fully developed with a department of Recreation. At present there does not appear to be sufficient co-ordination of this work, with any one single officer being responsible for its policy, programme or working. Recreation rural and urban, industrial and agricultural, recreation for all young and old, men and women is a national need. A Ministry of Recreation with a well organized Department of Recreation manned with specialists, qualified and experienced for recreational work is an urgent necessity.

"Sir, I envisage vast possibilities for national uplift and welfare that may accrue out of this scheme. I see visions. I visualize villages prosperous and flourishing, with folk full of joy and happiness, healthy and physically fit, imbued with the single purpose of one for all and all for each, living in harmony and peace side by side. The popular Governments have declared rural welfare and uplift as one of the main planks of their platform. We look to you, as the Minister in charge of Development and to your colleagues in the Cabinet to so expand this recreational scheme so to make it really beneficial to all concerned therein. Your being here with us this afternoon is an earnest of your deep and abiding interest in the scheme. We thank you for your support and encouragement, and we await on you, Sir, now for your address inaugurating this Conference."

In his inaugural address the Hon'ble Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami Raja, said—

"I thank the organizers of this conference for having invited me to inaugurate this Conference and having thus enabled me to participate in its deliberations. I deem it a privilege to meet the Rural Recreation Organizers of the various districts of this Province on whom rests the heavy responsibility of enlivening and enlightening the millions of rural population.

"I may say without any hesitation that the rural recreation programme constitutes an integral part of national reconstruction. Improvement of the health, morals and spirits of the people is as much of vital significance to the proper building up of a nation as a thorough exploitation of the natural resources and accelerated production of the material requisites of well being. Work and production of wealth are, no doubt, the fundamental laws of life; however they are directed to the attainment of welfare and happiness. In a well organized society, work, and recreation, production and consumption of goods should be harmoniously blended with one another. Recreation and consumption may take many forms; they may be injurious or wholesome in their effects on both the society and individuals. It is your special and sacred duty to weed out the former and cherish and encourage the latter types. A considerable amount of skill and tact, indefatigable energy and deep sympathy with the villagers' ways of life are essential to the proper fulfilment of your onerous responsibilities.

"Even a cursory view of the present day village will convince anybody of the complexity of the problems to be tackled. The harmony, peace and plenty of the ancient village community have given place to discord, faction and impoverishment of the villagers. The unwritten moral code enforced in the villages in the past kept away feuds, litigation, disorderly conduct, drink evil and degradation of humanity. But at present, that moral code has lost its sway over the people. As a consequence, villages have decayed, and the rural population are leading as highly and artificial life as the towns-folk without the compensatory advantages. The cancer of decay has been rapidly spreading in recent decades and the people, having lost all their old moorings and having secured no new principles of conduct, have been drifting away from healthy ways of living. Thanks to the inauguration of Prohibition in 1937 in our Province, attention came to be focussed on this dismal aspect of village life and it was strongly felt that the revitalization of rural life was an imperative and urgent need. At the outset this feeling prompted the Government to appoint Physical Instructors in the "dry" districts alone to organize sports and other counter-attractions to drink. Subsequently the Government considered rightly that it was more important to provide such counter-attractions to drink in districts which still remained 'wet'. This led to the employment of Rural Recreation Organizers, almost one in each district, all over the Province. I need hardly impress upon you who form this team of officers, that with the expansion of the staff, there was also an extension of the scope of your activities. At present yours is not merely the negative task of weaning people from the evil of drink; your duty has become positive, vastly complex and highly constructive. It is incumbent upon you to introduce a radical reformation in and effect a noble transformation of our rural life. There is a multiplicity of evils which must be uprooted; there are many deficiencies which must be eliminated; and for this purpose you should be resourceful in devising a variety of activities.

"Recreation in the west may mean hiking, ski-ing, cruising and boating or basking in the sunshine on the sea-side health resorts. Such methods of recreation, a poor country like ours can hardly afford. In the context of universal proverty and undernourishment prevalent in India, the meaning and implication of recreation should be different. It must certainly serve to satify the instincts of adventure, exploration, physical exertion and aesthetic expression but at the same time contribute not only to the physical development but also to the enrichment of the land and the people. While your primary objective is to build up a healthy mind and body, the secondary objective of harnessing even pleasurable pursuits to wealth-creation must on no account be lost sight of.

"I may say a few words about the prime objective. Your target is to make every individual man, woman and child—sound in body and mind. Your activities must not be exclusively devoted to adults or children but to the entire population. Building up a strong and healthy population, bubbling with vigorous energy and high spirits will result in a high class of man power. Many people are physically weak, if not degenerate; they must be made by

your efforts strong and brimming with health. This achievement alone will bring great credit to your work and will contribute to improve the quality of Indian labour. The significance of man-power in the armed might of a nation at war or in the economic prowess of a nation at peace has been realized in its true and proper proportions only during the recent years. Although numerically the second biggest nation in the world, in the matter of health, strength and efficiency, our men compare very unfavourably with the people of other countries. This huge task of improving the health and strength of the people by giving them interesting games and pastimes must be carried out according to a predetermined plan. It should be your endeavour to attain your target wihin five years. You have to perform a double task in order to be successful. You have got to prune away the bad and injurious habits of living. You will have, first to educate the people and prepare their minds for executing your programme. Education must not be in the pure didactic way. By practical examples and indirect persuasion, you will have to make the people fall in love with your programme of work. This change in the psychology of the rural masses cannot be easily effected; villagers are generally sceptical and look askance at townsmen going to them in a patronising manner and standing on a high pedestal of their own. To disarm their suspicion, to make them imbibe your teaching, follow your precepts and emulate your examples you must all have humility of the great teachers and the steadfast devotion of missionaries to their cause. The work is difficult but it is a magnificent work worth attempting and doing successfully.

"Let me turn to the secondary objective. As I said, recreation and sports in this country must be indirectly related to the creation of wealth. It is impossible to divorce pleasure from profit in this country more than in any other. With this purpose in view, I would like to suggest some pastimes which will achieve the twin purpose of pleasure and profit, recreation and reconstruction.

"During the last six years, there has been an unprecedented destruction of forests and our forest wealth has dwindled considerably. The giants of the forests have been cut down to serve the military sector. Sylviculture or tree-planting along the roads on village commons as well as in private lands will be an interesting pastime.

"Subsidiary occupations must be developed according to the natural resources available in each locality. According to Mahatma Gandhi, the best method of education must be craft-centred and not book centred. More of geography, science and history can be taught to adults and children alike through teaching, say poultry farming than by laboriously perusing the cold print of lifeless books. Poultry keeping can easily supply the background for a study of the various birds and the lands in which they flourished. The price of eggs can be made a lever to teach the rustic people the market conditions and the laws of supply and demand. In this manner every one of the subsidiary occupations can be used to educate the people and employ them profitably. It is said that 'idle man's brain is the devil's workshop'. By giving continuous employment, which will not smack of dirty and dreary drudgery, the villager is kept busy and his life can be woven into a

texture with that of birds and beasts he rears. The fascination of seeing one's own plants growing and bearing fruit or one's own birds growing and laying eggs or one's own cow calving and yielding milk will be indescribable. Bee-keeping, jaggery-making, rope-making, vegetable gardening, toy-making, basket-making and others may be chosen in various centres. This shall not take up the hue of sordie business; it may be organized by the local recreation officer as a sport and people must be enlisted as members of a team, doing their work in a spirit of emulation; cheap and simple prizes may be offered to those of the competitors who have produced a record number of eggs, measures of milk, mats or baskets. Similarly arboriculture may be encouraged by giving a certificate of merit to those who plant a minimum number of trees or more and by allowing the planters to enjoy their fruits.

"Another interesting hobby is house-building. Even as children human beings take immense delight in building castles on the sands of the beach or river the grown-ups may be asked to choose sites in previously selected areas and build houses themselves with the necessary assistance from experts. This sport will ultimately result in new houses and if the houses, to be built, should conform to accepted designs, people will find themselves in course of time living in healthier homes.

"The organizers of recreation can divide the villagers into a number of brigades and train them each in a particular kind of sport. The natural aptitude of the individuals may be studied and the brigades may be formed; digging and delving may enthuse some; they may take to road-making or well-digging as their hobby. Some may be loath to go out of their homes or gardens after their daily work is over; they may be taught indoor crafts, creative, and æsthetic in their nature.

"A great deal of ingenuity is needed to adapt sports and crafts according to local and individual requirements. Music, dancing, bhajanas, etc., can be used to stimulate on the part of the people a desire to live a better and healthier life. All these call for high qualities of head and heart on the part of the Rural Recreation Officers. They should have an alert mind, resourcefulness, a missionary zeal, patriotism and abundant capacity to make sacrifice. Your path is new and untrodden; it is strewn with stones and thorns and your journey forward is arduous and difficult. You must have a high sense of duty and a fervour to serve the people; then all your noble efforts will be crowned with success.

"The Government are aware of your grievances regarding pay, travelling allowance, staff, equipment and accommodation at the various places you will be visiting in due discharge of your functions. I may assure you that legitimate demands will receive the most sympathetic consideration. Let me once again thank the organizers of the Conference for having enabled me to meet all of you to-day."

The opening session was closed with a vote of thanks by Dr. G. F. Andrews.

PROGRESS OF RURAL RECREATION WORK.

REPORTS OF RURAL RECREATION ORGANIZERS.

From a presentation of the "Progress of Rural Recreation Work" by the Rural Recreation Organizers it was clear that distinct achievements had been made. All were agreed that the Grama Sanghams functioning in some districts, and the cultural centres in other districts could be made to serve as a nucleus for rural recreation work. Villagers, it was stated, were coming forward to donate funds for the building up of club houses, recreation huts, for playgrounds and for conducting tournaments. In many districts, rural uplift schools were being conducted. Parks were being slowly developed, while reading rooms were a common feature. Villagers evinced keen interest in games and public gymnasiums have been organized in one district with the aid of donations from the public. Organization of rural dispensaries, veterinary centres, women's associations, etc., were other features of the rural development scheme. It was specially interesting to note that in some villages factions ceased to exist as the result of the efforts of the Rural Recreation Organizers and the introduction of the Recreation Scheme.

Extracts from the reports of progress received from Rural Recreation Organizers are given below.

SOUTH ARCOT DISTRICT.

The Rural Recreation Scheme was inaugurated in this district towards the close of the year 1942 when Mr. A. M. Jacob, B.A., L.T., was appointed as the Rural Recreation Officer. But after working for a few months he joined war service as Security Officer under the late National War Front. So much so the post was vacant for one year until Mr. V. N. Venugopal was appointed as Rural Recreation Officer on 14th December 1943. After the cessation of hostilities Mr. A. M. Jacob, B.A., L.T., joined back as Rural Recreation Officer from 1st February 1946.

During the past eventful years the Rural Recreation Officer was able to visit over a hundred villages and did propaganda mainly on Rural Recreation despite travelling difficulties.

About fifty recreation clubs have been formed in the various parts of this district. The Rural Recreation Officer inspects and supervises these clubs periodically.

Allotment.—An amount of Rs. 400 is being allotted for the scheme every year. Out of the four hundred rupees about Rs. 300 worth of sports goods are purchased and distributed to the recreation clubs to attract the villagers. The remaining amount is spent by way of awarding prizes in annual sports and tournaments.

Agencies.—Usually the village munsiffs and school teachers are in charge of these recreation clubs.

Demonstration classes in physical activities are held when the Rural Recreation Officer visits these clubs. Generally the interest for the members of the club tend to wane soon after the Rural Recreation Officer leaves the particular village, due to lack of proper leadership.

Tangible results can be obtained in the villages only by appointing at least one physical training instructor for each taluk to supervise the clubs. Of course, the general standard, especially of the villagers of this district, is deplorably low.

Playgrounds.—At present playing fields are not earmarked for the recreation clubs, but playgrounds attached to the board's schools in rural areas are being used with the permission of the President of the District Board without prejudice to the legitimate school programme. In some places where poramboke lands are available they are being used as playgrounds.

Activities.—Facilities are given for playing football, volley ball, tennikat, dodge ball and also other indigenous games like chedugudu, kho-kho, nondy, kilikodu and relay games. In some clubs the members are getting down dailies and weeklies.

Tournaments.—Annual tournaments have been conducted in volley ball, badminton, chedugudu, kho-kho, tug of war and in athletics, and prizes also were given away to the winners.

Propaganda.—The following are some of the topics which have been dealt with by the Rural Recreation Officer when he visited the villages: General education, place of the physical education, importance and place of recreation in everyday life, importance of club life, formation of clubs, community health and sanitation, epidemics, food nutrition, ration savings, rural uplift, evils of drinks, etc.

Village officers' training.—Village officers are the key stones on which the edifice of Revenue Department is built.

It was really fortunate and useful to have given the Rural Recreation Officer the opportunity of giving physical training for about a week when they attended their training classes. Both theory and practice classes were held as a result of which the village officers who have attended the classes are now in a position to understand about recreation scheme. But unfortunately most of them are too old to take any active part in any schemes.

Contact with other department.—The co-operation of other departments like Local Boards, Revenue, Education, Health, Police, Soldiers' Boards, Welfare Workers, etc., were regularly applied for and availed of wherever possible.

Periodical conference.—The Rural Recreation Officer attends the periodical conference regularly and appraises the members of the work done by the Rural Recreation Officer during the quarter. The Collector was pleased to issue orders to all the district officials especially District Educational Officer to help the promotion of rural recreation in this district.

Hope Cultural Centres.—This district is sigularly fortunate for having opened three Hope Cultural Centres. The Rural Recreation Officer visits the centres during his tours and arranges for meetings of the villagers. The villagers make use of these clubs as recreation centres. Measures are being taken for making them more attractive and useful.

General.—The Rural Recreation Officer has been assisting at the public sports and tournaments. The villagers are mostly illiterates, and labour hard for their livelihood. Much has to be done for their betterment. More and more efficient leaders are required for the rural uplift.

In short, much has been done but much more remains. May the organization grow from strength to strength and continue to be beacon light to the villagers of to-day and to countless generations yet to come.

TINNEVELLY DISTRICT.

The Rural Recreation Scheme is in active force in this district only from April 1945. Within a period of six months from my taking charge, four special meetings consisting of Revenue Divisional Officers, Tahsildars and other district officers under the Collector's presidentship have been held. The outcome of these conferences was that twelve model recreation centres are to be organized for each taluk and sub-taluk of the district and that villages having 2,500 or more population be the units. There are 200 such villages in this district and the formation of village recreation associations is going on apace. Hand bills have been printed in Tamil and circulated throughout the district in all the 1,048 villages.

In selected villages in every taluk and sub-taluk rural sports were held and prizes distributed. Emphasis is being placed on such competitions like ploughing, transplanting paddy shoots, spinning, weaving, pounding and winnowing relay (paddy) for women, etc. Local arts like villadippu, pavakoothu or marionetts, silambam and Madura veshadaris and mimicries are being encouraged as far as possible by cash endowments and bhajanas have been programmed with success. This in short, is the programme that is being carried on in this district.

CHITTOOR DISTRICT.

With the hearty co-operation of my assistants, I have organized number of rural recreation clubs throughout the district. During our tours we used to teach all sorts of country games in rural areas and recreating the minds of rural population immensively. In this district, the people are very much interested in taking part in rural recreation activities. We have organized six volley ball courts in this district. We are giving prominence for enacting dramas, Pandari bajana, fancy dress and excursions as some of the items of rural recreation activities. During our tours we used to speak to villagers about health, education, village sanitation, medical aids, agriculture, cattle, etc.

At the time of conducting taluk tournaments and district tournaments, all officials and public are giving their co-operation so that we are getting on with our work very well.

MALABAR DISTRICT.

The Rural Recreation Scheme was brought into effect in the Malabar district in June 1942. The district comprises of nine taluks and the organization work was done in each taluk one after the other. With the co-operation of the village school teachers

and the village headmen, rural recreation committees were formed. At the earlier stages, either due to the lack of faith of the villagers in rural recreation or due to their natural disinclination to join together and take part in activities, the progress in the direction of forming committees was not very encouraging but the people began to realize the importance and beneficial results of Rural Recreation organization to such an extent that at present the district has 130 rural recreation centres as against 44 in the year 1944. The local higher elementary schools generally formed the nucleus.

Activities.—Games formed the chief items. Such of the games as were best suited to the local conditions were introduced. Volley ball, foot ball, ring tennis, deckquoit, playground ball, captain ball, pin ball, dodge ball, native ball and such indigenous games like chadugudu, atyapatya, French war, kho-kho and small area games and group games were the main items. Sports items such as high jump, long jump, tug of war, cricket ball throw, shot put and races were also included among the programme. Sports materials supplied by the Government were placed at the disposal of the committees. Music programme, folk dances, kalaripayat, camp fire items, stunts and pyramid building, etc., were also arranged whenever possible. The members of the committee evinced a keen interest in the recreation programme and infused a real interest into the minds of the villagers to make the Rural Recreation scheme a success.

Tournaments.—A round of tournaments were arranged and successfully conducted during the period from 1942 to 1946. Due to local conditions, tournaments in all the games could not be conducted. Volley ball tournaments and sports were conducted in all the taluks except one and the response from the competitors was good. In all the tournaments not less than eight teams competed and in certain cases twelve teams sent in their entries. Effective organization and other rural recreation work, such as tournaments, inter-village matches, etc., can be conducted only for seven to eight months, as for the rest of the district will be experiencing heavy monsoon. Besides the tournaments in games, Rural sports in high jump, shot put, cricket ball throw, tug of war, etc., were also conducted. There used to be a good gathering at the tournaments and sports. "Villagers from the neighbouring places used to attend these turnaments, winners in tournaments and sports were awarded cups and medals supplied by Government."

The scheme as a whole is now put on a sound basis and is working successfully in almost all the centres.

East Godavari district.

The following are the general lines of endeavour.

The classification of a taluk into a suitable number of centres as adopted by the Educational Department for organizing the rural recreation activities is followed. The village schools are taken as the centres of the activities and suitable programmes are organized.

The teachers' meeting associations, local recreation or sports associations—village co-operative societies, village panchayats and other non-official bodies are helpful in organizing the rural recreation activities.

The teachers' meeting associations—Rural recreation.—Every taluk is divided into a number of centres for purposes of organizing teachers meetings by the Educational Department. The Rural Recreation Officer got into touch with these associations, addressed meetings and organized recreation demonstrations explained the scope of the Rural Recreation Scheme activities. Attempts are being made to subdivide and group each one of these units into smaller divisions to facilitate close contact within the smaller units. For example, a centre consists of 15 to 20 villages on an average and these 15 to 20 villages are divided into 4 or 5 groups for purposes of inter-village competitions, etc.

Educational Department and its co-operation.—The District Educational Officer is requested to give all possible co-operation in launching the new scheme of work and instructions are given by the District Educational Officer to the Taluk Inspectors under his jurisdiction to give all possible help. The Junior Deputy Inspectors and Senior Deputy Inspectors in the various ranges in the division, are giving their active co-operation and are very helpful in organizing the centre sports. They exhorted in the centre meetings that teachers should take special interest in prompting a scheme like the Rural Recreation Scheme.

Village co-operative societies and village panchayats.—In some centres village panchayats are very helpful. In a recreation centre named Gokavaram in the Rajahmundry taluk, the village panchayat Board President took the initiative in organizing the centre sports and successfully conducted the programme. An amount of Rs. 80 is collected from the surrounding villages for organizing these activities. Co-operative societies are also extending their financial help to an extent. His kind co-operation is not generally forthcoming from all the centres.

Local recreation associations.—In certain villages the local enthusiastic youths spend their evening time in playing badminton. In some of these centres, tournaments are also organized and conducted. These associations are encouraged to take keen interest to make recreation a feature of the locality. They are assisted by the Rural Recreation Officer in the conduct of the sports.

In some villages where there are public libraries, facilities are being given for the public to play indoor games like chess and carroms. The presidents of these libraries are requested to take up the work of the rural recreation. In a village named Angara in the Ramachendrapuram taluk, the vice-president of the local library is making arrangements to provide a park and a playground for the benefit of the public.

Rural recreation sports.—Rural Recreation sports are organized once in an year in a selected number of centres. For organizing these sports some of the suitable teachers' association centres of the various taluks in the district are selected. Each

centre this association formed a recreation committee with the assistance of the local public and the revenue staff and chalked out a programme in the light of the suggestions given by the Rural Recreation Organizer. On a convenient date fixed, boys and adults from the different adjoining villages came and participated in the sports. The boys sports are open both for the school boys and the outside boys. They are divided into different groups according to their heights. The following are the events introduced :—

(1) Chedugudu, (2) Athletics, long jump, running sack race —three-legged race, (3) shot put, (4) cricket ball throw, 5) kolatam, tug-of-war are the events selected for the adults. (A grain weighing 14 lb. iron stone is improvised for the iron shot).

In the year 1944–45, these sports are conducted in 24 centres and in the year 1945–46 they are conducted in 28 different centres distributed in the district. In each centre, competitors nearly from eight different villages on an average took part in the sports.

In the year 1945–46 receration sports are organized for the boys of the various schools in the headquarters with the co-operation of the local public. Team games and athletic event are also included in the programme. Contributions are collected from the public and prizes are awarded to the winners in kind. The Collector of this district presided over this occasion and distributed the prizes to the winners. The importance of recreation or play is stressed by the Collector in his address.

In a village named Gollapalem, a recreation association consisting of the school teachers opened a rolling silver cup to be awarded to the winners in the annual chedugu tournaments to be conducted year after year. This is one of the villages selected by the Rural Recreation Organizer for organizing and conducting the centre sports.

Prize distribution—Finances.—The Collector, East Godavari district, sanctioned an amount of Rs. 300 per each year towards the conduct of the rural sports and for prize distribution. This amount is proportionally distributed among all the selected centres. Articles in kind are purchased and given to the winners in the sports. In certain centres, local contributions are also added to the amount sanctioned by the Government.

Supply of games' equipment.—The following games' equipment is supplied to the Rural Recreation Organizer :—

(1) Volley ball, (2) tennikoit, ring and a net, (3) playground ball and a bat, (4) twelve lazeems, (5) twelve pairs of fancy clubs, (6) megaphone, (7) whistle.

This equipment is useful in organizing and conducting recreation programmes in the rural areas.

Various types of activities.—The Rural Recreation Organizer is able to do the following work with the help of the equipment provided above :—

(1) Ball games—lead up games—minor games, (2) volley ball, (3) playground ball—lead up game, (4) chedugudu and atyapatya or uppatti, (5) lazeem drill—drill with fancy clubs—kollatan, and (6) talks on health and other topics of local interest.

How the Rural Recreation Organizer started work when he visited a village.—The Rural Recreation Organizer when he visited a village got into touch with the village officers, the school teachers—village panchayat board members and other important local people. They are explained about the Rural Recreation Scheme and they are encouraged to start a recreation club for their village. In the evening, a number of boys in the locality are gathered with the aid of the school teachers and games are organized. At the end of the games' programme, the scope and importance of the Rural Recreation Scheme is explained to the players and other people that gathered to see the games.

In the villages, the labour class generally play out-door indigenous games at night time, on the full-moon days. Whenever possible, the Rural Recreation Organizer organized chedugudu and other activities at night on full-moon days for the villagers.

Financial resources.—With the exception of an amount of Rs. 300 sanctioned by the Collector from out of the yearly sanction by the Government for organizing tournaments, there is no financial support to push up the scheme. It may be within the competence of the local panchayats to give financial help to an extent if they get departmental sanction, for want of which, it is stated, they are now unable to do so. The local panchayats used to organize health week celebrations in the rural areas with the necessary departmental sanction, i.e., sanction from the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards. If such sanction is accorded, they may be able to help the recreation associations to an extent.

The question of leadership.—The Rural Recreation Organizer is only depending upon voluntary leadership. Such people being engaged in various walks of life are not able to bestow proper attention upon the rural recreation work.

In brief.—Attempts are being made to popularize the Rural Recreation Scheme by making contacts with the different associations and the local public in rural areas. Popular support is gaining ground. Intensive work is not possible under the present circumstances for want of leaders capable of taking up the work in the absence of the Rural Recreation Organizer and for want of the necessary finances. The interest shown by the centre associations in organizing the annual sports in the different centres in the district, the local support given by the various individuals in fostering such activities and schemes is a good indication to show that there is progress in the working of the Rural Recreation Scheme.

ANANTAPUR DISTRICT.

Progress of rural recreation work.—As instructed by my District Collector, I go taluk by taluk and after completing one taluk, I go to the next.

I am able to organize recreation clubs, only in such villages where there are some educated. In other villages, though there are educated, owing to factions, I did not succeed. Anyhow, I introduced bhajana in such villages. At present there are about 20 recreation clubs in full swing.

Some villages are ready to purchase radio sets for the village. Some other villages are also eager to have radio sets, provided the Government pays half the cost. Many villages are getting papers.

This year I conducted about 15 rural sports meets during the times festivals in the whole district. Eight out of 15 have been conducted with the contributions from the public. This shows the eagerness of the public for recreation.

The arrangement for the district sports and tournaments in badminton, chedugudu, is in the preparatory stage. The public promised trophies and free boarding for the competitors.

NILGIRI DISTRICT.

Inauguration of the Rural Recreation Scheme.—The Rural Recreation Scheme was introduced in the Nilgiri district in the year 1943. I was appointed as the Rural Recreation Officer in March 1943. This scheme was inaugurated in one of the villages by the Collector of the district in the following month, April 1943.

Rural recreation clubs.—The first rural recreation club was organized in a village called Annikorai. Afterwards clubs were formed in 32 important villages. These clubs are self-supporting. Annual general body meetings are held and office bearers are elected every year to run the club. Almost in every village, district board schools are being used as club rooms or reading rooms, after school hours. In most cases, the headmaster of the school is elected as the secretary and the treasurer and the headman or moniagar, as the president. Young men regularly visit these clubs, read papers and play in-door games, like rings, carrom and cards.

Playgrounds.—During the period of these three years, three playgrounds have been granted. Government lands were alienated to the villagers and a sum of Rs. 300 to each of the playground, from the Collector's discretionary funds, has been granted by the Collector. The villagers donated further big sums and made these playground quite suitable for all major games. In one of the villages, the villagers subscribed Rs. 1,200 to level the ground. It is now, one of the best playgrounds in the district.

Physical demonstrations.—Annual demonstrations of physical activities are being held at Ootacamund, Coonoor and Kotagiri. Children numbering about 1,500 from rural areas take part in the function. Transport of these children, feeding, etc., are provided by the committees with influential gentlemen and ladies have been formed. These committees are called "Physical Demonstration Committees." These committees collect donations from the public and run these physical demonstrations every year in their respective taluks. Along with the children, young men from villages, demonstrate games like chedugudu, killithattu, kho-kho and oyil kummi.

Nad system.—The Nilgiri district is divided into four nads, namely, Toda Nad, Parang Nad, Merku Nad and Kunda Nad. In each of these four nads, there is a committee with a president and secretary. Each president has presented a big silver cup for the inter-village tournament, which is being conducted every year.

Tournaments.—Inter-village tournaments are being conducted every year. The nad president and secretary form a committee every year to run the tournament. For each nad tournament, about 30 village teams enter. Villagers numbering 500 or more use to assemble to witness the matches. Inter-village tournaments are being conducted every year in all the four nads. After these tournaments are over, the Inter-Nad League Tournament is conducted. A rolling shield is given away to the winning nad team.

Refresher courses.—In 1945 three refresher courses in Physical Education were conducted. Two for men teachers and one for lady teachers. Seventy-three teachers from both rural and urban areas attended the course. The Assistant Woman Specialist in Physical Education, Madras, assisted me in conducting the course for women teachers. Several Indian and non-equipment games were taught to them. This year 1946, two courses, one in Ootacamund and another at Coonoor were conducted on the same line as conducted in Salem. The courses covered subjects like Physical Training, Bee-keeping, Agriculture, Co-operation, Maternity and Child Welfare, Contagious Diseases, Village Sanitation, Firstaid, Seed Multiplication Scheme, Grow More Food, Wheat and its preparations, etc. Forty teachers from rural parts attended these courses.

Dramatic associations.—There are 17 dramatic associations in 17 villages. Young men take a very keen interest in music and dramas. Puranic stories are enacted and these have become regular annual feature.

Firstaid.—Firstaid materials such as tincture of iodine, bandages, boric powder, quinine pills, aspro, potassium permanganate, etc., are supplied to the villagers. Last year we purchased these materials for Rs. 200 and distributed to 40 villages. These articles are in charge of the headmaster. Firstaid lectures and practice are being arranged and two young men from each village are being trained in Firstaid. All minor wounds and accidents are treated by these trained men.

Conclusion.—The introduction of the scheme has made every young man in rural area, active and healthy. They have now learnt some of the qualities of a good sportsman. Their old rough ways and crooked ideas, shyness, timidness, inferiority complex, filthy habits are slowly disappearing. They are fond of games and sports. Every village wants a playground of its own. We are trying our best to see that every village becomes a proud possession of a beautiful and spacious playground.

TANJORE DISTRICT.

There are 11 taluks in my district divided into two divisions each under a Revenue Divisional Officer. I work division by division, instead of doing cross country flying visits. When a taluk in the division is selected, a conference of the Tahsildar with the Revenue Inspectors and the Rural Recreation Organizer is convened by the Tahsildar. The village headmen are not invited to this conference as they have already been contacted in the village officers training class in batches of about 75 at a time. The Scheme of

Rural Recreation is already explained to them and also what part they have to play in working it out successfully. In this conference with Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors certain villages in each taluk are selected, as it is not possible, for one organizer to go to all villages in the district in one year and do useful work. The Revenue officials are requested to help in the matter of influencing certain mirasdars in their jurisdiction to patronize and finance the scheme, as the Government help for financing the scheme is almost nothing.

When a village is visited a scheme of the recreational needs of that village (scheme report) is prepared consisting of the following particulars :—

(1) The name of the village, (2) existing facilities for recreation, (3) facilities still required, (4) measures to be adopted for their provision, (5) funds from which the expenses are to be met, (6) details of schools, (7) normal activities of the villagers, (8) extent to which drinking is prevalent.

Particulars regarding water-supply, health, etc., is left aside as there are other departments to look after them.

When this survey is made, with the help of the village munsiff or the Revenue Inspector, a meeting of the villagers is convened, very often late in the evening at 7 or 8 p.m. Rural uplift is the main theme for talk and along with it, the need of recreational activities in villages, to help the villager to spend his leisure time usefully and cheerfully is also explained, and a rural recreation committee is sometimes formed at the end of the meeting or the next day, consisting of the leaders of the village. Every adult above the age of 14 is a member of the Recreation sangham or club and he is expected to pay a subscription towards the maintenance of the club.

With the help of this committee, a poramboke site within the village is selected, if available, and sometimes a playground is immediately prepared for use with the help of the village menials and other volunteers and games like chedugudu and other Y.M.C.A. group games are played. If the villagers do want to play some modern games, volley ball, badminton and games are provided. When such preliminary arrangements are made the club and its activities are entrusted to the care of the committee and the Rural Recreation Organizer proceeds to another village.

The actual work done is tabulated under the following heads :—

(1) The name of the village, (2) number of recreation sanghams formed, (3) number of playgrounds formed, (4) description of sports material supplied, (5) steps taken to induce the villagers to take part in sports and other amusements, (6) public meetings and demonstrations arranged, (7) readings rooms organized.

A fortnightly diary consisting of the scheme report of the villages and the actual activities done in these villages along the lines stated above is sent to the Collector, through the Revenue Divisional Officers of the respective divisions. This procedure is helpful in that it enables them also to be in touch with the work

of the Rural Recreation Organizer and help him and guide him in his work. Along with each fortnightly diary, a consolidated statement of the activities done up to that date is also given to watch the progress of the work as a whole. There are registers kept with the secretaries of the village recreation club to note the activities and progress of the recreational activities to help the touring and inspecting officers to get an idea of the work done in the villages.

Tournaments and exhibitions on a minor scale are conducted every year in every taluk, which are very often presided over by the Collector or Deputy Collectors.

Progress sheet of the Rural Recreation Scheme, Tanjore district.
1942—46.

Recreation sanghams formed—209.

Recreation sanghams working satisfactorily—80.

Main activities of these rural sanghams—

(1) Games—Indian and western.
(2) Reading clubs.
(3) Lectures.

Firka and taluk tournaments—32.

Amount spent from Government grant for tournaments—Rs. 1,685.

Permanent playground formed from Collector's grant—17.

Amount spent for such playgrounds—Rs. 750.

Special lectures on rural uplift and recreation—
Village officers' training class—30.
Panchayat training class—4.
Teachers' meeting—8.
Schools visited—93.
Public demonstrations and meetings—10.

This extract of the detailed summary of the work done in this district already submitted to the Collector is given to have a rough idea of the progress of the work done since the inception of the Recreation Scheme in this district.

South Kanara district.

Organizational unit.—This district has been divided into 85 recreational firkas or units. These units form the basis of organization. They are different from the revenue unit of firka. Parts of different firkas may be often found included in one recreational unit, also in one revenue firka there may be more than one recreational unit. This division is made on the population basis. In each unit there will be a central Recreation Committee with branch committees in less populated centres in that unit. The Taluk Headquarters Committee has no jurisdiction over the unitary committees, but they help in the conducting of the taluk tournaments and sports for which many of the units send their teams to the taluk headquarters. The District Committee at Mangalore has no other function than helping in the conducting of the tournaments and sports at the headquarters.

The unitary centre or branch centre is generally opened with the village school as its nucleus, but in places where there are already existing some kind of young peoples' organization for recreational purposes, their meeting places form the structural basis.

(As this paper is meant to give only an idea about the progress made in our work after the first conference in 1943, only the changes effected in 1945 and 1946 are mentioned.)

The Government sanction of funds still remains to Rs. 175 for this district, but the co-operative societies are showing little more interest and applications for financial help are often favourably treated; Panchayat Boards also are showing willingness to help, but sanction from the Inspector of Local Funds will take a long time to get. Donation of Rs. 50 from the Udipi Municipality is the biggest contribution so far got from local bodies. The biggest amount got from co-operative societies is Rs. 15 given by Kasaragod Co-operative Society. The municipality's donation was for the holding of a sports for the recreation centres of Udipi taluk.

The moveable wealth of the organization has increased by four presentation cups (silver), one donated by the District Board President, called the "Aroor Civic Cup," another donated by the Secretary of the Karkal Kasba Recreation Committee, called the "Karkal Taluk Best Village Cup". The former cup is to be presented to the best of the four major panchayats in the district—best in matters of civic amenities of life with special emphasis on sanitary and recreational arrangements. The latter is to be presented to the best village in Karkal taluk. The other two are for two district tournaments to be held in Mangalore. A cup for an annual boat race at Mulki has also been promised.

Acquatic activities under the scheme has begun only this year. It is not possible to make it a daily regular activity for any centre but have become an interesting periodical function which provides an half day recreation for thousands of people at a time. The most active centres for this are Mulki and Kasaragod. Last boat race and acquatic sports at Kasaragod which was presided over by the Collector attracted not less than three thousand people and the Collector himself offered 13 prizes.

The co-operation of other departments have increased considerably. In addition to the revenue officials including the Collector, the Additional District Magistrate, Revenue Divisional Officer and Tahsildars, the District Superintendent of Police, the District Educational Officer and the District Board President have all become interested in the scheme. They are usually very glad to accept any invitation to preside over our functions and to give whatever departmental co-operation is required from them.

Local papers are also showing great interest in the organization. They publish news about all important functions and one paper, the other day, came out with a leading article about the working of the recreation scheme in this district.

Permission has been obtained from the Collector for collection of Rs. 3,000 for the construction of a public gymnasium on the Central Maidan at Mangalore. It is doubtful whether it is advisable for the rural worker to take up any work in the town. In this case I was successful in getting the Municipality to undertake the construction and maintenance of the gymnasium. I only have to find the necessary money. Whether the recreation organizer should completely ignore urban areas, is a question which I would like to discuss at the Conference.

Bellary District.

I am concentrating my work in one taluk after another. Before starting work in the taluk, I have been meeting the Tahsildar of the concerned taluk who would select some villages for starting rural uplift clubs. I was going to these villages and halting for two or three days in each village and was meeting the leading public and young men of the village to start a club.

1. First, I visit the schools and demonstrate indoor and outdoor games which have got both educational and physical values and instruct about health habits to the pupils and request the teachers to see that the boys, do practise them daily and further request them to start parents' associations in every village. I have also been taking census of school-going age children and how many are attending the school.

At times with the kind permission of the Inspector of Schools, I have been attending Elementary School Teachers' Centre class meetings and demonstrating games and sports and explaining to them how the village will be badly affected if there are drunkards and if there is bad sanitation in the village.

2. I have been visiting Harijan quarters and addressing them about value of education, sanitation, healthy habits and addressing them to send their children to the local school. I have been exhorting them in every meeting to give up their habit of drinking which is ruining their health, observing their daily earnings which they secured it by their physical hard labour. I stressed in many a meeting that by habituating themselves to that bad habit they are losing their self-respect, money, losing their physical health, etc., which are important and essentials in their life.

The dwellings of the poor people and Harijans are mostly bad, unwholesome. I am further advising people to improve the sanitary conditions in their dwelling houses. I have also explained to them how by residing in bad surroundings, breathing foul air, where there is no free ventilation, by drinking impure water, they degrade themselves and their families. They crowd together in foul neighbourhoods, into dwellings, possessing no element of health, order and decency. The results are inevitable loss of self-respect, degradation of intelligence, failure of physical health and premature death. Even the highest minded philosopher, placed in such a situation would gradually gravitate towards brutality.

The sickness caused by bad dwellings involves frequent interruptions of work and drives upon the savings.

The low tone of physical health thereby produced is one of the chief causes of drunkenness.

The unhealthy and unhappy homes are a cause for the loss of vital and consequently of industrial energy, and create a consciousness of inability to control external circumstances.

3. After assembling the coolies, and Harijans I have been distributing jaggery water mixing with pepper to those people and advising them that this drink is good to their health and strength than any other stimulant and that on the other hand by taking to intoxicating liquids like toddy, etc., they spoil their health, they waste their daily earnings, lose their self-respect and in the end they become the worst beggars of the country.

I have been encouraging them in keeping their houses clean and tidy by offering a small but useful prize for the cleanest house I find in the locality.

4. I would go round the village which I visit. Then I hold a public meeting inviting all the leading villagers and explaining them how the village will be badly affected if there is drinking habit among the people in village, and addressing about their village sanitation—when it is bad how they will be affected when a contagious disease breaks out and how they are poor in educating their children or even sending their children to the local school.

The fundamental laws of health and hygiene are simple and easily learnt. The difficulty is about their observance. Here are some :—

(1) Think the purest thoughts and lavish all idle and impure thought.

(2) Breathe the fresh air day and night.

(3) Establish a balance between bodily and mental work.

(4) Stand erect, sit erect, and be neat and clean in every one of your acts, and let these be an expression of your inner condition.

(5) Eat to live for service of fellow-men. Do not live for indulging yourselves.*

(6) Your water, food and air must be clean; and you will not be satisfied with mere personal cleanliness but you will infect your surroundings with the same threefold cleanliness that you will desire for yourselves.

I further explain to them the advantages of doing regular moderate exercise, which improves their physique, removes waste matter from the body, creates good energy and strength; purifies the blood and strengthens digestive system, improves their mental energy—disadvantages of having factions in the village and value of reading rooms and libraries and request them to raise little subscriptions and start reading rooms.

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* Hence your food must be just enough to keep your mind and body in good order. Man becomes what he eats.

In some centres, I have raised subscriptions from villagers and started rural uplift clubs at Kudatini, Moka, Rupanagudi and Hulicera.

At public meetings, a president, a vice-president, a treasurer and a secretary for each of these clubs were elected to be in charge of the clubs in the village. The amounts collected in each village were duly handed over to the respective treasurers and receipted for by them on the same day of collections.

I started badminton, ring tennis, chedugudu courts and opened reading rooms.

Kudatini is having *Andhra Prabha*, *Samyukta Karnataka*, *Indian Express*. Moka is getting *Andhra Prabha*, *Samyukta Karnataka*, *Madras Mail*, monthly magazine *Bharathi*. Rupanagudi is getting *Samyukta Karnataka*, *Andhra Patrika*. Hulicera is getting *Andhra Patrika*.

Some general books were also collected for these reading rooms. The books, the newspapers and games are open to everybody in the village whether he pays subscriptions or not. I am appealing to the villagers to pay a monthly subscriptions for reading rooms and to get newspapers, articles of games, etc.

In April 1946, I have arranged rural tournaments in Bellary wherein six villages have participated.

West Godavari district.

Outlines.—I. Programme of the work.

II. Introducing the scheme through the village clubs.

III. Public enthusiastic spirit revealed.

IV. Tabular form of the progress.

I. The work of the Rural Recreation Scheme practising in the West Godavari district basis on the co-operation of the gentlemen with that of the masses. The aim of it being the diversion of attention of the drunkards from drink, the evil habit to that of health habits. Object of it being the achievement of peace and prosperity among the people and the country.

II. This scheme to establish permanently for the good of the country and its people is to start with the village clubs. The village clubs should be made to run the activities on the foundation of enabling the people—

(i) to gather knowledge by means of reading books of all kinds and daily news papers;

(ii) to get the health habits by means of games, equipments and necessary implements;

(iii) to know who is who and their difficulties sympathetically through leadership and perfect discipline for success to lead a healthy wholesome life.

III. While approaching the people or the public of the place where tournaments for the rural areas were held, secured not only their help for the proper conduct of the tournaments but also their

finance. The finance of the Government all these years being meagre, the finance thus got by the local managing committee which was formed at the time of the conduct of the tournaments, helped not only bringing the deserving and attractive rewards but also provided the competitors with free boarding and lodging arrangements. At some places the villagers were so enthusiastic that they provided boarding for the public also that came to witness the tournaments from far off villages or places. Such organizations seemed a wonderful picturesque and inculcating the sporting spirit among the young and old.

Some of the places where these tournaments were held awarded permanent rolling shields to the Rural Recreation Organization which should be presented to the winners of the year and tournaments and to be returned after six months to the Rural Recreation Organizer of the district. Thus the spirit has been well developed with the initiative of the Rural Recreation Organizer of the district. Thus the spirit has been well developed with the initiative of the Rural Recreation Organizer to the public that realized the importance of the scheme and its work.

IV. Tabular form (by the end of July 1946)—

1. Number of new villages visited in the district by the Rural Recreation Organiser—

(*a*) Up to the end of last month—188;
(*b*) in the month toured—2;
(*c*) up to the end of the month—190;

2. Number of villages yet to be visited in the district—

(*a*) up to the end of last month—587;
(*b*) in the month toured— ;
(*c*) up to the end of the month—585.

3. Number of sports clubs found to be existing—

(*a*) Up to the end of last month—17;
(*b*) in the month toured— ;
(*c*) up to the end of the month—17.

4. Number of sports clubs newly started by the Rural Recreation Organizer—

(*a*) Up to the end of last month—64;
(*b*) in the month toured— ;
(*c*) up to the end of the month—64.

KURNOOL DISTRICT.

The general plan of work carried in each village.

1. *Items of programme to be introduced in a village*—Mental—

(*a*) Educate and enlighten the villagers on the mental, moral and physical fall in the efficiency standard of the country.

(*b*) Discuss and elicit some of ways that are necessary for the above development.

(*c*) Explain and convince the people how this recreation would be helpful to develop these.

(*d*) Talks how to make a good use of their leisure by picking up hobbies.

II. *Physical activities.*—(*a*) Indigenous games familiar to them. (*b*) Offensive and defensive arts. (*c*) Natural activities. (*d*) Less expensive foreign games. (*e*) Fundamental skill. (*f*) Some in-door games.

III. Enrohinal—Koluntan—Folk dancing—Music burra katha or story telling—Bajanas.

IV. Some social occasional games and competitions.

V. Realization brought through education the necessity of park and playground and proposal to the good to issue some selected place to raise park and V.L. as playground.

VI. Advise to start inter-village tourneys on faction and other days of re-issue.

VII. Finally formation of a committee to shoulder the responsibility and to run the same successfully—

(*a*) Generally it is named as "Vyam Sangam."

(*b*) The number of the committee mentioned vary according to the size and taste of the place.

(*c*) Office-bearers—(1) Patron, (2) president, (3) secretary, (4) treasurer and (5) a capable leader.

(*d*) Duties of the committee—

(1) To enlighten the public the advantages of recreation and how drink is detrimental.

(2) To see that any health officer or other officer that visits the place give a talk on health, hygiene and epidemics.

(3) To raise a park.

(4) Competitions among boys.

(5) To arrange bajana, story-telling, folk dancing, etc.

(6) To try to include provision of all ages.

(7) To educate the public to pick up some hobby.

(8) To conduct some tournaments with neighbouring villagers.

(9) To draw a programme for a quarter to keep a record of all their activities and work.

(10) To see that boys take training in physical activities and encourage them to take part in the taluk and district tournaments.

(11) Formation of clubs and their working report to be sent to the Tahsildar through the Revenue Inspector.

(12) To equip these centres fully with recreational equipments.

(13) Appeal and rich man to give a cup to these tourneys to keep up centive. In addition to small individual prizes.

(14) To plan at least one tourney every year.

VIII. Annual programme—Conduct of sports and the concerned expenditure.

Programme of work for the year 1946–47.

July 1946. Dhone and Pallikonda—Formation of clubs and educating them on the recreational activities.

August to September 1946. Nandyal—Concentration on the success and help sufficiency of the formed clubs.

October to November 1946. Cumbum—Concentration on the success and help sufficiency of the formed clubs.

December 1946 to January 1947. Visiting district, divisional and firka tourney centres in the different parts of the district. Couching and making necessary preparations for the ensuing tourneys.

February to June 1947. The sports season of the year for the rural parts.

District, divisional and firka tourneys will be conducted. The dates of actually conducting these tourneys will be brought to the notice of the Collector after consulting the local people and the concerned Tahsildars.

Besides these regular and annual tourneys, inter-village and firka tourneys will be conducted on important festive days, like (1) Dasara, (2) Deepavali and (3) Sankaranthy, etc.

Places of conducting and the number of these vary according to the facility and fancy of the locality and the importances they attach to the facility and sport.

Definite programme of events and probable expenditure on the tourneys for 1946—

I. Programme of events for the third district tourney, to be held early in March 1947 at Mahanandy, Nandyal taluk.

Number and name of the item.	Kind, size and number of medals: Generally big size.	Ordinary big size.	Guilded second size.	Ordinary* third size.
1 Wrestling	1	1	..	..
2 Weight lifting	1	1	..	..
3 Exhibition of physical activities.	1	1	..	..
4 Pulling weight	..	..	1	1
5 Fencing	..	..	1	1
6 220 yards—Dash ..	..	..	1	1
7 Asanas	..	..	1	1
8 Tug-of-war	..	..	..	6-6
Children—				
1 100 yards—Dash ..	..	..	1	1
2 Swimming	..	..	1	1
3 Three-legged race ..	..	..	..	2-2
Total ..	3	3	6	6 8-8

* Group prizes—To be bought by the local people to make feel that it is their function also.

Medals—Given by the Government Fund.

Prizes—To be bought by the local people to make them feel that it is their function also.

II. Divisional tourney centres.

This at each centre—

1 Gonuntla	2. Guilded big sizes	8—8 prizes.
2 Markaym	2. Ordinary size	
3 Koilbuntla	5. Guilded second size	
4 Velpunnur	5. Ordinary third size	

In all the four centres—

Big sizes.		Small sizes.		
8—8	.. .. ..	20—20	.. ..	32—32 prizes.

III. Firka tourney.

Five centres—
1. Guilded big sizes .. ..
1. Second big sizes.. .. ..
4. Guilded second sizes .. ..
4. Third sizes .. ..
} 8—8 prizes.

Totalling 5—5—20—20 Medals.
40—40 Prizes.

—	Kind, sizes and number of medals.				
	Guilded big.	Ordinary big.	Guilded second.	Ordinary third.	..
Consolidated list of medals by Government—					
No. 1 District tourney ..	3	3	6	6	8—8
„ 2 Four divisional tourney ..	8	8	20	20	32—32
„ 3 Five firka tourney.	5	5	20	20	40—40
Total ..	16	16	46	46	80—80

124—Medals to be supplied from Government money.
120—Prizes to be bought by the local people.

Progress.

A hundred centres were formed in a district and are running. The tourneys have been recognized as annual feature and I hope they will be conducted regularly on a grand scale.

During the sporting season, enthusiasm and active co-operation will be evinced to convey them to a grand success.

Sound as the recreation scheme is, I cannot assure if any remarkable changes in the working, of clerks and of season unless the following, namely, (*a*) Illiteracy is combated, (*b*) proper leadership is encouraged, (*c*) succentives are created, (*d*) financial support is extended, (*e*) proper central and supervision is exercised equivocally enlisted and (*f*) economic depression is balanced and finally the Government are pleased to approve and implement the above suggestions.

MADURA DISTRICT.

Work done during 1945–46.

Madura taluk.—I selected eight villages in Madura taluk as an experimental measure for the organization of Rural Recreation activities. The villages are selected on the basis of one village in each firka. The villages selected are: (1) Kallandri, (2) Chattrapatty, (3) Samayanallur, (4) Tirupparakundrum, (5) Paraipathi, (6) Varishiyur, (7) Chittampatty and (8) Goripalayam.

I organize village recreation sangams in all the above eight villages. The strength of the working committee is 10. The village headmen are appointed as the Presidents of the Sangams. Karnams and the local headmasters are the officials in the committees. I have also allowed the committees to admit any number of members who pay an annual subscription of 2 annas. By my efforts more than thousand members have been enlisted in all the eight villages. In the form of annual membership fees including donations a sum of Rs. 250 has been raised. I framed by-laws as adopted in Salem district (copy of which is enclosed) according to which the sangams are to run. I printed the by-laws and

distributed them among the members of the Sangams. According to the by-laws the amount belonging to the Sangams should be kept in the Postal Public Savings Account. As per my instructions all the committees have opened the Postal Public Savings Account except Samayanallur. Arrangements are being made to open a similar account for Samayanallur.

I have started the following activities in the concerned villages as detailed below :—

(1) Kallandiri—Chedugudu, oyyalkummi and kolattam.

(2) Chattrapatti—Chedugudu, oyyalkummi and kolattam.

(3) Samayanallur—Chedugudu, oyyalkummi and kolattam.

(4) Tirupparankundram—Foot ball, volley ball, badminton, oyyalkummi, chedugudu and kolattam.

(5) Paraipathi—Volley ball, chedugudu, oyyalkummi and kolattam.

(6) Varichiyur—Kolattam, bajanai, drama and chedugudu.

(7) Chittampatti—Volley ball and chedugudu.

(8) Goripalayam—Oyyalkummi and kolattam.

In order to develop good skill and efficiency in group games sports and athletics I conducted matches and sports in the villages of Samayanallur, Kallandiri, Paraipathi, Tirupparankundram and Chattrapatti. Prizes were awarded to the winners. Both the villagers and the pupils of the various schools in the villages participated in the sports.

I took advantage of the festival occasions where I had a good number of gatherings of villages and gave the lectures pointing out the importance of celebrating such functions and necessity of organizing recreational activities as fundamental principles of the festival celebration. I delivered such lectures in Tirupparankundram, Kallandiri, Chattrapatti and Varichiyur villages.

I visited all the schools in all the eight villages and conducted model physical education classes. Teachers were instructed to conduct daily physical training classes for the pupils in the lines suggested by me. I instructed all the pupils of the schools how to keep personal cleanliness such as cutting their nails once in three days, cleaning teeth twice in a day before and after bed.

I conducted public meetings in the villages and explained the importance of the following subjects :—

(*a*) Importance of participating in daily physical activities.

(*b*) Keeping the village premises clean.

(*c*) Benefits of village sangams.

(*d*) Benefits of joining the army.

(*e*) National Savings Scheme.

(*f*) Grow more food.

(*g*) Evils of hoarding.

Melur taluk.—The villages selected in Melur taluk for rural recreation activities are as follows:—(1) Natham, (2) Sirugudi, (3) Kottampatti, (4) Thumbaipatti, (5) Keelavalavu, (6) Vallalapatti and (7) Tiruvadavur.

I organized village recreation sangams in all the above seven villages. By my effort nearly a sum of Rs. 300 has been raised in all the villages in the shape of donations and membership fees. The funds are being utilized as per by-laws.

I conducted sports in all the seven villages and distributed the prizes to the winners. Details of rural recreation sports conducted in the selected model villages in Melur taluk are furnished below:—

Date.	Name of village.	Prize winners—school pupils. Boys.	Girls.	Prize winners—villages. Boys.	Girls.	Total number of prize winners.	Amount spent for sports.	Number of villagers who attended the sports.	Who presided and distributed the prizes to the winners.
							RS.		
24th July 1945.	Kottampatti ..	26	29	10	..	65	20	550	1 *
25th July 1945.	Thumbaipatti ..	25	16	14	3	68	20	1,000	2
28 July 1945 ..	Natham ..	34	28	12	..	74	20	750	3
29th July 1945 ..	Sirugudi ..	58	21	10	..	89	20	750	4
31st July 1945 ..	Vallalapatti ..	54	24	19	11	108	20	1,000	5
2nd August 1945.	Thiruvadavur ..	40	40	25	9	114	20	1,000	6
3rd August 1945.	Keelavalavu ..	43	32	30	9	114	20	1,000	7

* (1) Revenue Inspector, (2) Revenue Inspector, (3) Headmaster, Board B.S., (4) Headmaster, Board D.S., (5) Sri Kollan, (6) Revenue Inspector and (7) Tahsildar.

Regarding propaganda work I utilized the festival occasions, schools and public meetings as explained in the Madura taluk.

Periyakulam taluk.—The villages selected in Periyakulam taluk for rural recreation activities are follows:—(1) Vadugapatti, (2) Devandanapatti, (3) Theni, (4) Jakkampatti, (5) Chinnamanur and (6) Gudalur.

I organized village recreation sangams in all the above six villages. By my effort nearly a sum of Rs. 350 has been collected. I have started the following activities in the six villages as detailed below:—

1. Vadugapatti—Volley ball, badminton, chedugudu and fencing.

2. Devadanapatti—Foot ball, volley ball, oyyalkummi, chedugudu and kolattam.

3. Theni—Foot ball, badminton and chedugudu.

4. Jakkampatti—Badminton, chedugudu, oyyalkummi and kolattam.

5. Chinnamanur—Badminton, volley ball, chedugudu, fencing and oyyalkummi.

6. Gudalur—Volley ball, badminton, chedugudu and fencing.

I conducted sports in all six centres. Details of the rural recreation sports conducted in the centres are furnished below :—

Date.	Name of village.	Amount of Government grant.	Amount spent for R.R. Construction Funds.			Total amount spent for sports.			Number of prizes awarded.	Number of participants.	Number of villagers who attended the sports.	Name of President who distributed the prizes to the winners.
		RS.	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.				
5th and 6th December 1945.	Chinnamanur ..	20	19	1	0	39	1	0	40	150	2,000	1 *
7th and 8th December 1945.	Gudalur ..	20	23	6	0	43	6	0	67	275	2,500	2
12th and 13th December 1945.	Devadanapatti.	20	30	0	0	50	0	0	54	175	2,000	3
14th and 15th December 1945.	Vadagupatti ..	20	22	4	0	42	4	0	56	215	1,500	4
18th and 19th December 1945.	Andipatti ..	20	25	0	0	45	0	0	60	300	3,000	5
20th and 21st December 1945.	Theni	20	28	13	3	48	13	3	66	306	3,000	6

* (1) Sri Susaiprakasam, Tahsildar, (2) Executive Officer Sri N. Narayana Pillai, (3) Sri T. Muthuswami, Lecturer, Presidency College, Madras (4) Revenue Inspector, Devadanapatti, (5) Periyakulam taluk, Touring Veterinary Surgeon and (6) Vasudeva Rao, Headmaster, Theni.

Regarding propaganda work I utilized the festival occasions, schools and public meetings as explained in Madura taluk.

I have started the activities in the concerned villages in Melur taluk as detailed below :—

1. Natham—Physical culture institute, volley ball, foot ball, oyyalkummi and chedugudu.
2. Sirugudi—Chedugudu.
3. Kothampatti—Foot ball, chedugudu and oyyalkummi.
4. Thumbaipatti—Volley ball, oyyalkummi and chedugudu.
5. Keelavalavu—Volley ball and chedugudu.
6. Vallalapatti—Volley ball and foot ball.
7. Tiruvadayur—Library, volley ball and chedugudu.

As per Government Memorandum No. 61700-G/44-6, Development, dated 23rd July 1945, for encouraging folk dance in villages, I organized two demonstrations, one at Karamathur and the other at Devadanapatti during Mahasivarathiri festival occasions. Prizes were awarded to the participants. I explained in the public meetings the attitude of the benign Government towards the improvements of health and physic of the villagers by encouraging such kind of recreational ancient Indian activities.

COIMBATORE DISTRICT.

Progress of rural recreation in the district of Coimbatore.

The scheme of rural recreation was inaugurated in the year 1943 and since then I am in charge of the scheme. The scheme has worked very satisfactorily in this district. The fundamental idea in this scheme is to afford facilities to the village folk to use their leisure more beneficially, mental moral and physical. The play

habit is most useful on which everybody has to cultivate to enjoy the fullness of life. I can confidently say that I have succeeded in making this habit among the villagers and town folk of my district.

To create a lasting interest in this programme I have started rural recreation training centres and made use of associations, clubs, health culture centres, which are devoted to social welfare and physical culture activities.

The starting of rural recreation training centres, training village teachers as guides and leaders to run the sports clubs, I have given training to the athletic and public-minded young men and put them in charge of the school. Number of training centres, 40. Number of village guides trained, 860.

I have travelled extensively in the district and came in contact with the public and leaders of the public very closely. The village folk as a whole, welcome this scheme and render all possible help in propagating this and take to this very enthusiastically.

Many officers have gladly come forward to deliver lectures and guide the villagers on the way of to progress. In the conduct of play festivals, many gentlemen have acted as judges and rendered whole-hearted support to the scheme. I have conducted play festivals, tournaments, sports meet in villages and in firka headquarters. I have conducted separtely firkas ports meet and competitions and in taluk sports meet and competitions. All in town takes keen interest is evinced in this scheme. Number of sports meets and competitions conducted, 60.

I have co-operated with the National War Front activities and given training to the village guards in the security villages and to the security instructors, and help them all in the alert and in good team spirit, 40 security villages. I am also taking keen interest in the Post-war Reconstruction Scheme and given training to the village officers in this respect . . . Rural games and rural sport activities . . . Practical and theory.

On the whole, the progress of this scheme is very satisfactory. The villagers enjoy these games and plays and village functions are slowly disappearing as the result of our activities. The caste rigidity is slowly relaxing. The team spirit unity is growing. Though the spirit of faction and the evil habit of drink have not vanished, it is definitely decreasing and will disappear in course of time. The Rural Recreation Organizer has done a lot to eradicate these two bad habits with the villagers.

CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT.

In this district, the scheme was actually started in the end of 1943 till then the post was vacant. The Rural Recreation Officer visits villages, collects people, talk to them in a homely atmosphere on the need for the elementary and adult education, sanitation, cleanliness, games (games indigenous and foreign), dramatic value of prohibition, way of diverting the poor villagers from going to toddy shops and other evil and vice places by giving suitable attractive activities as mentioned above were explained to them.

In short, the ideals of "good life" and "better living" are impressed upon the ignorant and illiterate villagers. Youngsters, adults and elders were asked to play games like chedugudu, kho-kho, kiltnatnu suitable to ages and villagers. After mobilizing their enthusiasms and kinding their initiative, plans are discussed for the establishment of games, clubs, reading rooms, night schools, etc., all under the name of rural uplift or rural recreation association. Then an executive committee of eleven members is selected with the village munsif, president of panchayat board, local school headmaster and such other peope as ex-officio members. The rural recreation clubs as they are popularly known as mostly financed by local donations and voluntary subscriptions, with a reading room and a playground, the associations begin to function. As the local interest increases, the bajana parties, after dinner-dramas, occasional gymnastic displays, periodical debates and lectures, friendly matches, inter-village competitions in games and the like are added to the list of activities. The Rural Recreation Officer visits these clubs now and then and keeps going.

About 70 clubs have been established, and about 40 clubs are working satisfactorily. Many clubs which could not secure local help become defunct for want of funds to buy sports materials and other games facilities. The amount allotted for conducting tournaments were diverted to spend in giving encouragements to the established clubs by way of games materials. If the clubs are established permanently, matches and tournaments, etc., will be easier and permanent. If short-lived tournaments are held without a permanent organization or association in the village, nothing will be there to encourage them for the future. There are about 2,000 villages in the district. A single Rural Recreation Officer cannot tour for more than 250 days or villages in a year. Unless a village is visited at least thrice, no recreation clubs should successfully and permanently be formed or established. At the rate of one village per day and three visits per village, the Rural Recreation Officer can concentrate on 80 villages per year. Further, the maximum travelling allowance of a Rural Recreation Officer is fixed at Rs. 15 per mensem and later by a temporary increase of 50 per cent with a whole district as his jurisdiction. It is impossible to spread his activities on a wide scale. Further, the Revenue officials were full with problems relating to recruitment, savings, civil supplies, and as such, their help and influence could not be availed of.

In this connexion, it is submitted that a training school for village officers and Presidents, Panchayat Boards, conducted (in every district) at Tirukalukundram has won over time and distance as far as the Rural Recreation Officer's tour is concerned. He stays with each batch of trainees for about ten days and convinces them of the need for and methods of rural development through games and other recreational activities. The trainees were asked to play games so that they may acquaint the rules, etc., practically and personally. Inasmuch as the trainees are men of local influence and represent their villagers, opportunity is taken to enlist their sympathy and services for the establishment of associations and games clubs in their villages. They are suitably instructed in the subject.

The object of organizing the village associations is to organize firka, taluk and district associations and to spread the activities throughout the district in an organized and permanent way.

There are every indications for the cent per cent success of the scheme if more Rural Recreation Officers are appointed, the status of Rural Recreation Officers are raised to a decent level and sufficient funds are granted to help the clubs in their early stage.

NELLORE DISTRICT.

I submit that I was appointed in the month of October 1942. As per D. Dis. No. 6789/42, dated 28th December 1942, I was directed to work three months in each revenue division. Orders were issued to all the Revenue Divisional Officers, Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars to co-operative with the Rural Recreation Officer in organizing the scheme of work. Though the period was short, I was able to conduct sports at the end of the quarter in each division. Thus the year 1943 programme was finished.

In the beginning of 1944, the new Collector, who came to the district, directed me to work in one taluk alone, i.e., Atmakur, for whole year 1944. Accordingly, about ten centres were formed in the year. When I was about to take charge of another taluk, another Collector came and he issued proceedings to continue in the same taluk (Atmakur) in the year 1945.

While I was working in the Atmakur taluk, I requested the Collector to permit me to carry on the work already started in Gudur division previous to this scheme; under village games and sports, a scheme was started by the Young Men's Athletic Association, assisted by me, then as a physical training instructor, Board High School, Gudur, Nellore district, and progressed with the kind co-operation of the then Sub-Collector, R. Gallette, Esq., I.C.S., when the Government started this department and appointed the same man as the Rural Recreation Officer for the district (Nellore). It had its support to improve the scheme in the division (Gudur) and conducted its annual sports meet two years only. As per the above orders of the Collector could not find means to conduct the tournaments at Gudur division, I was not permitted to go out of the taluk. I even requested the Collector to issue orders to the revenue subordinates in the division to conduct the same but it was refused. Hence the organized activities, which are slowly developing, died away and the interest was curbed down. Now the organization was no more. The cups and the shields were taken from the clubs and kept in the Sub-Collector's office room, for the last two years.

I worked in Atmakur taluk for two years, 1944–45 and started 15 rural recreation scheme centres. I had a chance of improving the centres and conducted the second annual sports and tournaments in the taluk. The success is due to the kind help and co-operation of the Tahsildar, Mr. C. Jacob, B.A., who took more interest in securing five silver cups (rolling), costing Rs. 35 each and one rolling shield for about Rs. 75 from the influenced people of the taluk. For those two years, I was able to conduct firka and taluk tournaments. If the revenue officials take keen interest and give wholehearted support in the scheme, leaving inferior

complexity, the scheme will work well in the villages. As personally experienced, some of the officers are not giving their co-operation.

For the year 1946, I was asked to work in Kandukur taluk, reference R.C. No. 1391/46, dated 14th February 1946. In my R.C. No. 20/46, dated 31st March 1946, I requested the Collector to permit me to revisit periodically the centres formed in Atmakur taluk and Gudur division. But permission was refused in Collector's L. Dis. No. 3011/46, dated 6th April 1946: "Permission cannot be granted for visiting Atmakur and Gudur taluks as requested by you. You should work in Kandukur taluk only." As per the above orders, I will not have the chance of conducting the sports and tournaments at Gudur and Atmakur taluks. I request that the aim of Government in this respect may kindly be intimated to all the Rural Recreation Officers in the Province.

The scheme of work or the type of programme.

Items 1 to 5—Physical activities.—With and without equipment.

Items 6 to 9—Social activities.—In my opinion, there should be a specialist in the art, i.e., for seven and eight items. The committee selected "Dramatices" as one item; details regarding this have to be discussed in the conference. What are the means and methods to work out this item? Whether the Rural Recreation Officers will have power over the associations to enact dramas in the villages or taluks.

Item 10—Promoting hobbies.—This is one of the important items to be discussed in the conference to be held. What way we have to improve this art? Will the Government open any small cottage industries for the improvement of the villages? If so, what is the duty of the Rural Recreation Officer of the district?

Items 11 to 13—Propaganda on health subjects.—Without having health pictures or slides for these items, it will not have any effect while doing the work. I myself instructed the villagers to keep the houses cesspools, manure pits away from the street or houses. By way of mere advice, we find it very difficult. Unless we have some kind of these or pressure on the public, it is of no use. The local boards are not able to do anything to improve the villages. Hence, unless certain powers are imposed on them, better to cancel the items from the programme. One responsible officer, during my camps, questioned me the following: "On what authority you are asking the villagers to remove these manure pits? What action you are going to take if they fail to do so?" It is clear that we are not having any orders from above to make the people to follow our advice.

As we work and submit our diary to the Collector, they are asking us to show the work. We will be in a position to show the items of work, 1 to 5 only, effectively. The remaining is one of propaganda.

As per the orders of the Collector, Wellon, D. Dis. No. 6394/46, dated 21st June 1945, I was asked to send a monthly report

of the work to the District Educational Officer, Nellore. During our camps, we are visiting schools and conducting games and organizing Junior Red Cross and Boys' Scouts. Once I went to certain village and visited the school. This fact was reported to the Collector and to the District Educational Officer, Nellore. In return, I received the endorsement as follows : " On what authority I have to take action against the teacher?" I shows that it is for the namesake. Unless definite rules are framed, it will not be encouraging. If at all the Government wants to improve the scheme under rural development, further modification of rules and scheme of work and outlook may kindly be changed.

Financial position of the Rural Recreation Scheme.

G.O. Ms. No. 2896, Development, dated 30th May 1944.

Part I (b), Resolution (6).—Government was kind enough to sanction Rs. 200 under other charges. That is being used for contingencies, stationery and tournament expenses. It is stated that the local boards or panchayat boards have to contribute some amount for the conduct of sports in the scheme. When I approached the presidents and panchayat officers, they refused to pay anything towards the scheme. I request the Government to issue orders for the local boards to pay certain percentage from their total collections towards the Rural Recreation Scheme.

Copy of Board's B.P. Rout. No. 1991, *dated* 16*th April* 1946—*Budget* 1946–47.

The Board distributed an allotment of Rs. 830 under Hope Cultural centres in the district. In my R.C. No. 49, dated 11th July 1946, I went to the Collector requesting him to name different centres. But it was received in N. Dis. No. 6619/46, dated 22nd July 1946, informing that the sum of Rs. 830 is intended for expenditure on the construction of buildings at different places. I request the definite orders of the Government on this expenditure and the working of this scheme. Nothing could be done on the " Hope Cultural Centres " in the district (Nellore).

NORTH ARCOT DISTRICT.

After receiving the tour programme from the Special Development Officer, I proceeded in consultation with the Tahsildars to villages. A team for rural recreation is formed with the help of Revenue Inspectors or the village munsifs. Some eight to ten such teams constitute one firka. These teams play friendly matches among themselves. The best is consequently selected for the taluk sports and tournaments of rural masses. After having aroused a keen interest in physical games and also after paying due heed to their intellectual and emotional needs, a " grama sangham " is instituted in which discussion on hygiene, health and other interesting healthy topics are discussed. Entertainments by school boys and girls are always found to be welcoming. Here, it is worth mentioning that an initiative by advancing some funds is a feasible idea for starting a reading room which amount if requisite can be realized when sufficient funds are collected from the subscribers.

1. It has always been found that the schools in the villages form the centre of physical activities. The "Grama Sangam" committee passed many resolutions expressing their needs and requirements which are duly submitted to the Special Development Officer.

3. Due to permanent lack of equipment indigenous games are successfully schemed and carried out.

4. The best team of the firka unit is selected for inter-firka tournament and the best of the inter-firka tournament term is selected for the rural taluk sports when the Revenue Divisional Officer is also requested by the Convenor, Special Development Officer, to preside on this occasion, which has always been marked with great success. The best of the taluk sports team is selected for the district rural sports on which occasion the District Collector is requested by the Special Development Officer and this occasion too has proved to be very successful and carried out efficiently.

5. In a month, I tour for twenty-five days visiting twenty to thirty villages to keep the interest lively and effect such improvements in physical sports as felt requisite and a report is submitted every month to the Special Development Officer, who reviews our work and sends a copy to the Collector, the concerned Revenue Divisional Officers and Tahsildars.

6. The village committees have passed certain resolutions, which have been recorded by the Special Development Officer. These resolutions may be considered.

7. It is feasible to introduce in the village rural hospitals. The urge for it has been badly felt by almost all the villages who do not enjoy such facilities.

8. Twenty-five days tour in a month is really inconvenient. This problem may be discussed and reduction of five days may be effected. This will give us some rest and respite after each camp.

9. The fixed travelling allowance of Rs. 15 is quite insufficient when the present day standard of life is considered. This travelling allowance may be enhanced. Though all those who get a salary of Rs. 50 and above per mensem are eligible for annas fourteen per day and annas eight per day to those who get below Rs. 50 without enhanced rate, we are not allowed at the rate of annas fourteen per day because we get only Rs. 15, a flat travelling allowance, whereas the real travelling allowance is worked at Rs. 22–14–0 without enhanced rate. So our plight is better understood than expressed. This fact may be favourably considered and discussed in the ensuing conference.

SALEM DISTRICT.

Myself and my two assistants are working under the Special Development Officer, Salem, to carry on the programme of rural recreation work. During the year 1945–46 myself and my assistants visited the villages in 51 firkas, organized games and amusements and conducted 148 sub-firka tournaments and 51 firka tournaments, one district tournament, ten rural exhibitions and cattle shows. During these tournaments, large number of ryots and villagers attended the functions and witnessed the games and amusements. These occasions have been availed of to give talks to

ryots on the several items of "Rural uplift" work, grow more food crops and vegetables, food situation, informal rationing and tree planting.

Cups and prizes were awarded to the winning teams and winners in general sports. Articles useful to the ryots' daily life were given as prizes. Games and amusements, such as chedugudu, kho-kho, volley ball, villithandu, bajanas, dramas, etc., were conducted by us with the help of the uplift sangams on many occasions. We have also trained 21 candidates in physical education and rural games in the " Rural uplift summer school " held in May 1945 at Attur. These candidates were trained in the summer school to serve as "Village Guides."

Myself and my two assistants took the military officers and senior other ranks, who underwent " Rural Reconstruction " training course at the Salem centre to various village uplift sangams, firka sangams and taluk uplift associations and explained to them their working. We have also conducted firka, taluk and district tournaments in the presence of the military officers.

ASPECTS OF RURAL RECREATION WORK.

A succint presentation of the requirements of the scheme was made by Sri K. Nagarathnam Ayyar, Special Development Officer, Salem. He based it on the following directives from Government :—

(1) Pros. C.R. No. 82/46, Prohibition A, dated 17th October 1946.

(2) Pros. C.R. No. 40/46, Prohibition A, dated 21st October 1946.

(3) D. Dis. No. 1918–Abk/46, dated 24th October 1946.

(4) G.O. No. 2015, Rev., dated 17th September 1946.

(5) Pros. C.R. No. 105/46, Prohibition A, dated 22nd October 1946.

The details of the work are fully given in the above. They are of value to the Rural Recreation Officers, and so should be carefully studied by them.

The main aspects of work of the Rural Recreation Organizers, it was agreed, could be grouped under four heads :—

(1) Organizing and conducting programmes of recreational activities suited to the villages and the villagers concerned. (It was admitted that each Rural Recreation Organizer might have to plan out his own programme separately and that the standardization of programmes was not desirable.)

(2) Formation of grama sanghams or village rural recreation committees.

(3) Conducting village uplift schools and refresher courses.

(4) Assisting in the development of recreational activities whenever possible.

A study of the book " Rural Reconstruction," Salem district, by Sri K. Nagarathnam, Dip. Econ., Special Development Officer, Salem, is in this connexion recommended to all Rural Recreation and Reconstruction workers.

RESOLUTIONS AND THE CLOSING SESSION.

The Rural Recreation Organizers were unanimous in the adoption of the following resolutions :—

(1) It is reported at the conference that rural playgrounds have been very quickly developed as in Salem district due to the initiative of district Collectors, who directed the karnams in villages to report about available sites suitable for use as playgrounds and who then took immediate steps for the alienation of such sites as rural playgrounds. This conference requests Government to direct all Collectors to take the initiative in the matter of the development of playgrounds in every village.

(2) It is resolved that the Rural Recreation Scheme should function as a separate unit of the Revenue Department, with one Recreation Organizer for each taluk and one Recreation Officer for each district, directed by a Provincial Recreation Director.

(3) It is resolved that the District Rural Recreation Officers be provided with a van with all the up-to-date recreational equipments, and the taluk recreation organizer be provided with a motor cycle to speed up his work.

(4) It is resolved that the scale of pay of the District Rural Recreation Officer be that of the grade of the Tahsildar and the Taluk Recreation Organizer, that of a Deputy Tahsildar.

(5) It is resolved that as many of the present Rural Recreation Officers, who have pioneered in the field with great zeal and hope of betterment, be appointed as District Rural Recreation Officers if fit for the post.

(6) It is resolved that the Government be requested to make the Rural Recreation Scheme permanent so that the Rural Recreation Officers now in service are guaranteed security of tenure.

(7) It is resolved that the Rural Recreation Officers be granted travelling allowance according to the Madras Travelling Allowance Rules without any maximum as at present, being fixed.

(8) Resolved to request the Government to depute the Rural Recreation Officers working at present to a recognized Rural Reconstruction Centre to equip themselves further for rural reconstruction work.

(9) It is resolved to request the Government to give suitable promotions to the Rural Recreation Officers as Assistant Development Officers, Firka Development Officers and Special Development Officers.

(10) It is resolved to request the Government to increase the annual grant for the taluk, firka and district tournaments to Rs. 1,000 per annum.

(11) Resolved that the Rural Recreation Officers may be co-opted as ex-officio members of all the taluk and village rural development committees.

(12) This conference requests that liberal grant may be sanctioned by Government for construction of club houses.

(13) Resolved that the Government may instruct the Director of Public Instruction to issue orders to local bodies to permit the

Rural Recreation Officers to use the school premises during their tours on duty when any other accommodation for lodging is not available.

(14) Resolved that District Women Rural Recreation Organizers be appointed in each district for organizing and developing recreational activities among women.

(15) This conference requests Government, that such of those men who are trained in the rural uplift schools may be paid an honorarium of Rs. 6 per month so that they may look after recreational activities in their respective villages as village guides.

(16) Resolved that Government may give a definite directive to all district boards and other local bodies to permit utilization of definite sums of money for the purpose of rural recreation.

(17) Resolved that an amount of Rs. 10 per mensem may be given to the Rural Recreation Officers to meet the incidental and contingent expenditure, such as kerosene oil, chunam for marking lines, first-aid materials, etc.

(18) This conference requests Government that a compensatory allowance may be paid to such of the Rural Recreation Officers who have been temporarily transferred as a result of the introduction of prohibition in the eight districts like other Government servants who are paid such compensatory allowance when posted to special duty in view of the incidental difficulties arising out of the transfer.

(19) Resolved to thank the Government for convening this conference thereby affording facilities to the Rural Recreation Officers to meet, to exchange experiences and to express their opinions.

The resolutions were placed before Mr. R. M. Sundaram at the closing session of the conference after the valedictory address by Sri K. Nagaratnam Ayyar, Special Development Officer, Salem. Mr. Sundaram, in his concluding speech, while assuring the Rural Recreation Organizers of sympathetic consideration of the resolutions, once again exhorted them to carry on with their work with zeal of pioneers and in a spirit of service to the teeming masses in the villages.

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

The conference is over and the Rural Recreation Organizers have returned to their districts. The President of the Rural Recreation Organizers' Associations speaking for the Rural Recreation Organizers said that all were happy to have had the opportunity of being together, discussing their problems and finding solutions, and to find sympathy and support for them in the authorities. The success of the conference is to be seen in their work in their districts.

The prospect challenges. The rehabilitation of the villager is no easy problem. Through their recreational activities, the Rural Recreation Organizers have to help the villager to find his soul, to be convinced and convicted of the sordidness of his life and to be re-created, re-born as a new man of whom his family, his village and his country can be proud.